

REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-7 are pending in the application.

Applicant(s) respectfully request(s) the Examiner to acknowledge the claim for foreign priority and receipt of any certified copies of priority document(s) provided earlier or received from the International Bureau.

The Office action restricts the invention to one of two species:

- I. Claims reading on the embodiment of FIG. 5; and
- II. Claims reading on the embodiment of FIGS. 6 and 7.

In response, applicant(s) provisionally elect(s), with traverse, to prosecute species I, along with any newly added claims drawn to the same species. It is believed that at least claims 1–5 read on the embodiment of FIG. 5.

Applicant(s) reserve(s) the right to prosecute the subject matter of the nonelected claim(s) in a divisional or other continuing application.

Applicants' traversal is based at least on the fact that the embodiments are so similar that, regardless of whether or not they should be considered separate inventions, they are so closely related that searching both would not impose a serious burden on the Examiner.

MPEP § 803 - Restriction - When Proper

... If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.

Claims 1-7 are amended for non-statutory reasons, to correct one or more informalities, remove figure label number(s), and/or to replace European claim phraseology with U.S. claim language having the same meaning. The claims are not narrowed in scope. New dependent claims are added to at least partially restore the original range of claims that existed before multiple dependencies were removed in the preliminary amendment. No new matter is added.

Withdrawal of the restriction requirement and examination of the application on its merits are now respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue that may best

be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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